

The L A D Y's Garland.



A Virtuous young lady, ingenious and fair,
A nobleman's daughter whose name I forbear
To mention. But now I will speak in brief,
The sum of her trouble, her sorrow and grief.
And how she was suddenly struck with a dart,
Which pass'd thro' her breast to her innocent heart,
So that it oblig'd her to make grievous moan,
When set in her chamber or closet alone.

The man whom she fancy'd nothing did know,
How this youthful lady admir'd him so;
Which made her grief the stronger, we find,
Because she could not discover her mind.

For being one night at a dancing or ball,
She saw this young gentleman, proper and tall:
Whose gallant deportment pleas'd her eye,
That she thought none did his person out-vie.

The more she endeavour'd her love to withdraw,
The more she was wounded, perfection she saw
In him, as she danc'd with the ladies that night,
Her soul to his breast took a passionate flight.

Now when they had ended this comical mirth,
She privately asked concerning his birth:
It was told her an Oxfordshire gentleman's son,
Who many a brave noble action had done.

This added a second new flame to her love,
She earnestly begg'd of the powers above,
To find out a way it might be reveal'd,
For, said she, I die if its longer conceal'd.
By excellent fortune she had her request,
For this noble gallant above all the rest,
Did wait on her home, where to tell in brief,
From sighs he discovered the cause of her grief.

He found by her sighs and languishing eyes,
That he was the man she did value and prize:
Wherefore he did promise to come the next day,
That he to her beauty a visit might pay.

According to promise next morning he came,
For true love had kindled an amorous flame
Of earnest desire, he courted her still;
And soon he obtained the lady's good-will.

Now his whole study was how to convey
This amorous charming young lady away,
To finish the joys that so sudden begun,
Who gains a fair lady great hazards must run.

P A R T II.

THEY walk'd in the garden, under the trees,
She shew'd him how he might come with ease;
Says she, I can meet you when all are at rest,
And with thee I'll go, as I hope to be blest.

No one but my waiting maid of it shall know,
I love her, and therefore she with me shall go.
With many soft kisses these lovers proceed,
In this great adventure this night to proceed.

The long-wish'd for hour at last did arrive,
The lady and maid both did contrive
To pack up her garments so rich and so gay,
And so with her lover she posted away.

They up to the city of London did ride,
Where all things convenient they soon did provide,
For wedding this lady of fame and renown,
Which done, they tarry'd three weeks in the town.

To solace the lives in raptures of bliss,
The mean time her honour'd parents did miss
Her, and sent man and horse both far and near,
But they of their daughter no tidings could hear.

Her parents, friends, and relations, likewise,
Believ'd she was taken by sudden surprise,
To wed her and bed her at some idle rate,
Thereby to inherit her father's estate.

Some said, This must be with her consent,
Because that with her her chamber-maid went.
With that said her father in passion and wrath,
If with her consent I will punish them both.

The family was in distraction we find,
Her father and mother disturbed in mind;
Her father and mother did bitterly mourn,
And wish'd for this beautiful lady's return.

P A R T III.

WHEN in this city some time they had stay'd,
The lady unto her husband thus said,
We'll try if my father will be reconcil'd,
Perhaps they may pardon their innocent child.

He gave his content, and posted away,
And came to her father and mother, when they
Were sitting together, with friends in the hall,
For pardon then both on their knees did fall.

The father did storm with an angry brow,
I'll grant you no pardon, but here I do vow,

Him I'll send to prison, and you I'll confine,
I'll teach him to marry a daughter of mine.

Dear honour'd father, the lady reply'd,
My husband you have but small reason to chide;
What faults are committed impute them to me,
And let my dear innocent husband go free.

Are you, forsooth, madam, so able to bear
The weight of my anger? well, well, I declare
You shall have one share, and he have the rest,
No manner of pity I'll show, I protest.

Her lilly-white hands she with sorrow did wring,
Still crying, Ye powers, why did you bring
My innocent husband to ruin and shame,
When none in the world but me was to blame.

It is but a folly your fate to bewail,
I'll send him this minute strong guarded to a gaol;
And you to your chamber, where both shall remain,
And never more see one another again.

Why are you resolv'd to part man and wife?
Alas, I as freely can part with my life;
As to part with my jewel, my love let me have,
Altho' in a dungeon, a prison, or cave.

She could not oblige them the least to relent,
For strait to prison her dear love was sent,
And she to her chamber was hurry'd likewise,
To put forth her sorrow with watery eyes.

Her parents provided a servant to wait
Upon her, with diet both early and late;
One that was ill-natur'd, no other was she,
Poor creature, admitted or suffer'd to see.

To think of her jewel no rest could she take,
But still in her chamber she wept for his sake;
For to think of his and her sorrowful doom,
At length an infant did spring in her womb.

With melting expressions of her great grief,
She sent to her father for speedy relief,
Declaring that she was with-child by her dear;
But still he continued sharp and severe.

At length when the time of her travel drew nigh,
Her parents afforded her a slender supply
Of nourishment, just in the time of distress.
But there was no freedom for her ne'ertheless.

Then being delivered of a young son,
Her parents sent for it, their will must be done:
She kiss'd it at parting a thousand times o'er,
And said with a sigh, I shall see thee no more.

P A R T IV.

THEY sent for a nurse, who the child did receive
And made the charming creature believe,
By tokens and signs it was murder'd indeed,
To show they would have no more of the breed.

They brought back the mantle spotted with blood
And put before her; her eyes like a flood
Of tears like a fountain did run down again:
She said, My innocent infant was slain.

The father in prison, the infant destroy'd,
The mother in sorrow, who never enjoy'd
One minute of comfort since home I return'd,
O why are my parents so highly concern'd.

What can be the reason they hold him in scorn?
He's handsome, discreet, and a gentleman born.
Strait, proper, and comely in every limb,
My heart in my body lies bleeding for him.

He nothing enjoys for my sake but his chains,
For still in a prison of grief he remains;
Because he wed one of a noble degree,
I weep when I think what he suffers for me.

While she in her chamber did weep and lament,
Her father one morning a messenger sent,
To bring her before him without more delay,
Cloathed in apparel most costly and gay.

Now when to her honour'd father she came,
Said he, I have found out a person of fame,
With whom you shall wed, he'll make you his bride.
O do not afflict me, dear father, she cry'd,

I'm marry'd already, the more is my grief,
Debar'd of all pleasure, deny'd of relief;
Imprison'd and slighted with scorn and disdain,
No lady had ever such cause to complain.

You said, I dishonour'd your family,
By wedding a man that was meaner than me;
But it would be worse if I should contrive
To marry another while he is alive.

But was you to bring me the greatest on earth,
The son of a powerful monarch by birth,
I'd mind him no more than a mere slave;
The dearest of husbands in prison I have.

Dear daughter, this day we'll admit you to dine
With all our relations. A banquet of wine
I now have provided to pleasure my friends,
That's but a small kindness to make me amends.

For all the sorrow that I have gone through,
Alas, my poor innocent infant they slew;
My husband's imprison'd, my griefs manifold,
How can I be merry when he is in hold?

These words of his daughter made him to relent,
Therefore for her husband he presently sent,
And cloathed him then in sumptuous array,
And every fault was forgiven that day.

Her parents and friends were reconcil'd,
The nurse too was there, and deliver'd the child
Unto the young lady, whose comforts were more
Than had been for the space of twelve months before.

Her husband appear'd with so noble a grace,
That every lady that was in the place
Did take much delight to speak in his praise,
And wish'd them to see many prosperous days.

A squire spoke up with an audible voice,
And said to her father, Ne'er grieve at the choice,
For he is descended, as we understand,
By his mother's side, from a peer of the land.

Nay, much more he said to his honour and fame,
His friends were pleas'd, thro' joy they proclaim
To tell forth their glory, which still doth abound,
Throughout all the neighbouring villages round.

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